

Implement Internal Source Reduction and Reuse Programs at City Government Facilities and Schools

The City of Falls Church government and schools account for a substantial portion of the waste generated in the City. By practicing source reduction and reuse strategies, government and schools can significantly reduce the waste produced.

This action supports the City's SWM program goal (Chapter 4) of creating a model of resource efficiency, providing leadership by example.

The City has an opportunity to lead by example through reemphasizing its source reduction and reuse efforts and measuring and publicizing the results. The City can continue to foster source reduction and reuse initiatives by prioritizing source reduction and reuse in its purchase and procurement of products and packaging and day-to-day operations. Also required is extensive publicity within the organization and employee education on how to reduce waste.

The City staff will also emphasize environmentally friendly practices for the maintenance of parks, yards, and common areas around public buildings and encourage private companies and landscapers to follow similar practices.

Implementation Steps

Implementation involves the following steps:

1. Identify a strategy for source reduction and reuse in government facilities and schools, and create a draft plan to implement the strategy. Refine the plan through internal government meetings.
2. Finalize the source reduction and reuse program for government facilities and schools. Revise existing internal source reduction and reuse guidelines and direct the staff to include specific source reduction and reuse requirements in future contracts, construction projects, bid arrangements, etc.
3. Review the performance of the source reduction and reuse policy. On the basis of these reviews, the City may choose to revise the policy. The City may consider recognizing and publicizing successful efforts through awards.

Funding

Costs will be managed through the City's General Fund.

Provide Tools to Promote Increased Source Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling

The City will identify opportunities to provide small investments in equipment as a catalyst for expanding source reduction, reuse, and recycling activities. For example, the City may consider supplying composting bins to City residents who complete a backyard composting class. Businesses that express an interest in implementing a waste reduction or recycling program could be given a set of training materials and container signage for use in training employees. Organizations, such as churches or scouting groups, could be provided with tips and project descriptions for implementing source reduction, reuse, and recycling efforts.

This action supports the City's SWM program goal (Chapter 4) of achieving a net reduction in the volume of waste generated by providing the means to encourage, facilitate, and increase the convenience of source reduction.

Many individuals, businesses, and organizations recognize the value of taking steps to "help the environment," but either do not have time, do not know how, or perceive change as difficult or costly. By providing tools, the City will promote source reduction and reuse, showing interested parties how they can participate and providing the needed impetus to spur action.

Implementation Steps

Implementation involves the following steps:

1. Identify tools for residential, business, and organizational use.
2. Identify or develop funding sources; purchase tools.
3. Advertise the availability of tools in exchange for commitment to participate for some time and agreement to provide feedback on the success of the "tool."
4. Conduct activities, providing tools to interested members of the community.
5. Solicit feedback from participants.

Funding

Equipment, administrative, and educational costs will be covered through the City's General Fund. Grant opportunities may also be available to the City.

Promote Surplus Food Distribution Programs

Under this action, the City of Falls Church will promote surplus food distribution programs through development of a focused outreach and education program. Surplus food distribution programs divert edible food from the waste stream and into programs that serve the needy.

This action supports the City's SWM program goal (Chapter 4) of implementing source reduction programs by facilitating the diversion of food waste, primarily from businesses and institutions.

Washington, DC, and the surrounding metropolitan area have the second highest poverty level in the entire United States; hunger is an issue for many of the region's residents. At the same time, much edible food waste is generated at restaurants, grocery stores, catering operations, and institutions, such as schools, universities, and hospitals. In response, various food banks and food distribution operations, such as Food for Others in Fairfax County, have been established to bridge this gap. Food for Others' mission is to obtain and distribute free food to the hungry of Northern Virginia and to support food programs of other community-based organizations. Local merchants, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), food drives, and crop harvests provide the food; volunteers and staff provide the labor; and charitable contributions and fundraising events provide the budget.

Although some of the food generated by businesses in the City of Falls Church makes its way to Food for Others, most edible food enters the City's MSW stream. Food waste prevention and food donation are least-cost approaches for managing the organic fraction of the MSW stream. Other jurisdictions, such as Portland, OR, have established excellent models for local government outreach and education, resulting in partnerships between food-related businesses and food rescue agencies.

Implementation Steps

Implementation involves the following steps:

1. Survey existing food distribution programs to determine the City businesses that donate food. Work with the Office of Economic Development to identify additional food service businesses.
2. Review the findings of the research conducted by the Portland Metro Regional Organics Team to identify the obstacles to, and opportunities for, edible food donation.
3. Develop a program of outreach and education to enlist the participation of City businesses and individual citizens in providing edible food to local food distribution programs.

Funding

Administrative and educational costs will be covered through the City's General Fund. The ESC will assist with information gathering and development of educational materials.

Recycling

Recycling (including yard waste composting), the process by which materials otherwise destined for disposal are collected, processed, and remanufactured, follows source reduction and reuse in the solid waste management hierarchy.

Table 11-3 presents actions the City of Falls Church selected for the recycling of solid waste over the next 20 years.

Table 11-3. City of Falls Church Recycling SWMP Actions

Recycling SWMP Actions	
–	Promote public-private recycling programs
–	Improve public outreach and education to promote recycling
–	Increase business recycling by reducing recycling thresholds
–	Implement a Pay-As-You-Throw collection system
–	Encourage increased CDD recycling
–	Continue current yard waste recycling system; contract with composting facilities for dedicated capacity
–	Encourage increased MSW recycling at City government facilities and schools
–	Revise regulations to enhance recycling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand recyclables collected at multifamily residences ○ Expand recycling requirements for electronic wastes
–	Consider implementation of single-stream curbside collection system for recyclables
–	Participate in regional promotion of CDD recycling
–	Provide tools to promote increased recycling
–	Establish a recycling rate goal
–	Promote establishment of a regional food waste composting facility

Promote Public-Private Recycling Programs

Promoting public or private recycling programs is a cost-effective method for increasing recycling quantities. By supporting, encouraging, and

publicizing these public-private partnerships, the City can increase recycling while minimizing the use of and impact on City resources.

This action supports the City's SWM program goal (Chapter 4) of maintaining a private-public infrastructure that supports reuse, repair, and recycling by providing increased opportunities for recycling of electronics.

Some potential public-private programs are discussed below.

Promote a Rechargeable (NiCad) Battery Recycling Program

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 6, heavy metals present in rechargeable (NiCad) batteries can harm the environment when improperly disposed of. Efforts are needed to remove these materials from the waste stream to prevent their disposal at the Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF) or landfill.



A national program is already in place, the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC at www.rbcc.com), which accepts rechargeable batteries from customers and ships them for appropriate disposal. The RBRC helps recycle portable rechargeable batteries, commonly found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, camcorders, digital cameras, and remote control toys. Local participating companies include Home Depot, Target, Verizon Wireless, Radio Shack, Cingular, Staples, and Office Depot. Other locations that take batteries for disposal can be found on the website by zip code. The City staff will promote this partnership through its public outreach and education program and on the City's website.

Promote a "Buy Recycled" Program



The City may consider reestablishing a "buy recycled" campaign to help the development of local markets for recyclable materials. Under a "buy recycled" program, the City publicizes policies and practices for local businesses, government, and residents to purchase recycled-content products, as well as support activities that promote waste reduction and management. These practices help close the recycling loop by increasing the demand for products made from recycled materials.

Implementation Steps

Implementation involves the following steps:

1. Continually evaluate potential recycling programs for promotion. Seek to partner with private firms, including national groups, in recycling programs (such as the RBRC) to divert rechargeable and especially NiCad batteries from the waste stream.
2. Create a marketing strategy for each recycling program, including developing a message, evaluating target audiences, and developing promotion campaigns (for example, media and City events).
3. Review the performance of the promoted recycling programs. On the basis of these reviews, the City may choose to increase promotion, revise the marketing strategy, or reallocate resources to more effective programs.

Funding

Administrative costs will be covered through the City's General Fund.

Improve Public Outreach and Education to Promote Recycling

Education and outreach are the primary vehicles the City can use to promote wider participation in source reduction, reuse, and recycling programs. Successful education of the public helps ensure that recyclable materials are recycled, rather than disposed of as waste.

This action supports the City's SWM program goal (Chapter 4) of educating all members of the Falls Church community on the value of natural resources and the benefits of reducing consumption and adopting sustainable practices.

City recycling education and outreach efforts have helped achieve a nationally recognized recycling rate. However, the City's residential recycling rate has decreased in recent years, due partly to the transient nature of our population (40 percent turnover every five years). In addition, City residents, businesses, and institutions that receive service from private haulers have been underserved in terms of public outreach and education. Increased and improved communication, coupled with an effective and consistent recycling message, will result in further increases in the City's recycling rate and reduce the burden on disposal in the SWM system.

Potential improvements to public education and outreach efforts include enhancing advertising and promotions, developing courses for residents, simplifying recycling requirements, and offering technical assistance. The